DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 301 993 EC 211 790

AUTHOR Martinez, Sherrill
TITLE Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) Program Evaluation, 1986-87. Final Report.
INSTITUTION Topeka Public Schools, Kans.
PUB DATE Aug 87
NOTE 62p.; Paper presented at the Annual Conference of the American Educational Research Association (New Orleans, LA, April 5-9, 1988).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Basic Skills; Daily Living Skills; *Educational Needs; Elementary Secondary Education; Mainstreaming; *Mild Mental Retardation; Peer Acceptance; Prevocational Education; *Program Evaluation; *Student Placement
IDENTIFIERS *Kansas (Topeka)

ABSTRACT

Interviews, record reviews, student follow-up, achievement tests, survey instruments, and observation were used to gather data for the 1986/87 evaluation of the Topeka (Kansas) Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) Program. Strengths of the program were identified and included: a dedicated, well-trained staff; a good special education/regular education staff relationship; a growing acceptance of EMH students by regular education students; and numerous placement possibilities for students. Most regular education teachers understood the potential benefits of mainstreaming and were willing to teach EMH students. Two-thirds of the grade school and almost all of the middle and high school EMH students were mainstreamed for part of their school day. Areas of concern included: (1) the paucity of life skills, prevocational, and vocational training in grades K-8 and the lack of a work study coordinator at the high school level; (2) the placement of many students in interrelated classes in grades K-8, while having no similar placement options for students once they reach high school; (3) the placement of low functioning students in interrelated classes and of high functioning EMH students in self-contained classes; and (4) the advisability of the current emphasis on basic academic skill development in grades 1-8, especially considering the drop in achievement scores in arithmetic, spelling, and reading which occur in spite of the academic emphasis. (Author/DB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED301993

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

FINAL REPORT OF THE

1986-87

EDUCABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED (EMH) PROGRAM EVALUATION

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Sherrill Martinez
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

EC 211 790

Program Audit and Planning

TOPEKA PUBLIC SCHOOLS • 624 WEST 24TH STREET • TOPEKA, KANSAS 66611 • 913 231-0313

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

FINAL REPORT OF THE

1986-87

EDUCABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED (EMH) PROGRAM EVALUATION

Prepared By

Sherrill Martinez
Program Evaluation Specialist
Program Audit and Planning

August 1987

Topeka Public Schools
624 West 24th Street
Topeka, Kansas 66611

Paper presented at the Annual Meeting

of the

American Educational Research Association

New Orleans, LA, April 5-9, 1988

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Interviews, record reviews, student follow-up, achievement tests, survey instruments, and observation were used to gather data for the 1986/87 evaluation of the Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) Program. The evaluation was an attempt to answer questions generated by EMH staff and provide decision makers with information needed for program improvement.

Strengths of the EMH program include a dedicated, well-trained staff; a good special education/regular education staff relationship; a growing acceptance of EMH students by regular education students; and numerous placement possibilities for students. Most regular education teachers understand the potential benefits of mainstreaming and are willing to teach EMH students. Two-thirds of the grade school and almost all of the middle and high school EMH students are mainstreamed for part of their school day.

Areas of concern include:

1. the paucity of life skills, pre-vocational, and vocational training in grades K-8 and the lack of a work study coordinator at the high school level;

2. the placement of many students in interrelated classes in grades K-8, while having no similar placement options for students once they reach high school;

3. the placement of low functioning students in interrelated classes and of high functioning EMH students in self-contained classes; and

4. the advisability of the current emphasis on basic academic skill development in grades 1-8, especially considering the drop in achievement scores in arithmetic, spelling, and reading which occur in spite of the academic emphasis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	1
TABLE OF CONTENTS	i
LIST OF FIGURES	ii
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION	2
PURPOSE OF EVALUATION AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS	2
METHOD	3
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	5
EVALUATION SUMMARY	40
APPENDIX A: Results of EMH Staff Survey for Identification of Needs	42
APPENDIX B: EMH Work Study - Proposed Follow-Up Procedure	44
Work Study Follow-Up Data Sheet	45
Data Entry Screen	47
Key to Data Entry Screens	48
APPENDIX C: Reliability and Validity of the Wide Range Achievement Test	49
Staff Survey for EMH Evaluation	50

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure		Page
1	EMH Staff Demographics	3
2	Work Study Follow-Up Report	7
2b	Employer Questionnaire	10
3	Regular Education Teacher Demographics	15
4	Regular Education Staff Survey Results	16
5	Percent of Students Mainstreamed	17
6	Results of Observation	20
7	Discussion/Interactions with Others	27
8	Achievement Standard Score Comparisons	36
9	Interrelated Classrooms	38
10	Concurrent Validity	49

EDUCABLE MENTALLY HANDICAPPED PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) Program is an education program for students who receive significantly below average I.Q. scores (usually in the range of 50-75) and below average ratings on indicators of social and academic performance. Students are referred to the program by parents, teachers, and doctors. A parent consent form and a complete, comprehensive evaluation are required before placement into the program.

Each EMH student must have an Individualized Education Program (IEP) on file prior to receiving educational and/or related services. The IEP is a written statement of the special education and ancillary services needed by a student based on his/her current level of functioning. The IEP is a management tool and aids in the continuing evaluation of student progress.

Students in the EMH program are placed in special developmental classrooms according to their chronological age. Classroom levels are:

Kindergarten
Grade 1 - 2
Grade 3 - 4
Grade 5 - 6
Middle School
High School

In addition to individual and small-group instruction given by a specialized teacher, students receive speech therapy, music therapy, physical therapy, physical education, work experience, and other services as indicated on the IEP.

PURPOSE OF EMH PROGRAM EVALUATION AND EVALUATION QUESTIONS

The purpose of the EMH Program evaluation was to (1) collect information to answer the questions identified by the EMH staff and (2) provide decision makers with information needed to improve programs. Staff questions were identified in a two-phase process. First, each staff member was asked to develop three questions of interest to him/her and to send the questions to the evaluator (see Appendix A). Second, nine staff members met with the evaluator and used the input from the total staff to develop seven evaluation questions. The seven questions were:

1. How effective is the career and life adjustment of graduates from EMH programs?

2. How can in-building job shadowing programs be expanded (K-12)?

3. To what extent do EMH students profit from mainstreaming?

4. Does the district have sufficient placement alternatives for EMH students?

5. How can we make the identification and placement process (including IEP) more meaningful for students and parents?

6. In what way are children who are appropriately placed in an EMH program better off than they would have been if they had remained in regluar education?

7. How is the education an EMH student receives affected by that student's placement in an interrelated classroom?

METHOD

Fifteen EMH staff members were interviewed by the evaluator in February of 1987. Each interview lasted approximately one hour and covered ten questions. Figure 1 describes the staff members interviewed.

Figure 1

EMH STAFF DEMOGRAPHICS

Position	
Coordinator	2
EMH Teacher	6
Interrelated Teacher	7
Level	
Grades 1-2	2
Grades 3-4	2
Grades 5-6	2
Grades 7-8	5
Grades 9-12	2
All	2
Highest Degree	
Bachelor's	9
Master's	5
Specialist's	1
Hours in Special Education	
0 - 11	0
12 - 23	1
24 - 48	8
More than 48	6
Years Since Last Formal Study of Special Education	
0 - 3	9
4 - 7	3
8 - 11	1
Not Sure	2
Years of Teaching Experience	
0 - 3	2
4 - 7	2
8 - 11	6
12 +	5

Except at the high school level, teachers interviewed at each level included both self-contained and interrelated teachers. The majority of the interrelated teachers were trained in the EMH specialty area.

Information from the interviews was used to develop a survey instrument for regular education teachers. All regular education teachers in the interviewed special education teachers' schools, who had EMH students mainstreamed to them, were sent a survey instrument. Of the sixty-seven instruments sent, forty (60%) were returned.

The EMH teacher interview data were also used to develop employer surveys. A survey was sent to all employers who were known to have hired a student or graduate of the EMH program in the last eight years. Of the twenty-five surveys sent, six were returned. Telephone follow-up resulted in survey answers from four additional employers. (A return rate of 40%.)

An EMH follow-up data base was created. Procedures were developed for updating the data base, and the procedures were tested with data from three sets of graduates. Reports were then generated from the data base.

During teacher interviews and again in a memo to all EMH teachers, teachers were asked to review IEP conference schedules for the months of March, April and May. The evaluator asked to be invited to the conferences, if parents were expected to attend, for the purpose of interviewing parents. Many of the conferences in which parents were expected had been held prior to March; however, the evaluator did attend five conferences.

A concern of many of the teachers during the pre-evaluation needs assessment was misplaced students. The evaluator observed six classrooms in levels 1-2 through 7-8 for a total of ten hours to document how well students were functioning in their current placements. Four of the classes were interrelated and two were self-contained.

A special study was conducted comparing attitudes and achievement of special and regular education students. The special education data base was used to produce a list of students, currently in regular education, who had once been in an EMH program; and a list of students, currently in regular education, who had been evaluated for possible EMH placement, but who had not been placed. Each student on the list was matched with an EMH student. Matches were based on sex, grade level, and IQ. Each student's records were searched to determine date of initial evaluation for EMH placement and achievement test standard scores from that evaluation. The evaluator used the Wide Range Achievement Test-Revised (WRAT-R) to obtain current achievement standard scores in math, reading, and spelling. Evaluator-developed rating scales were used to measure student attitudes about school and teacher attitudes about student school adjustment. All measures were available for nineteen pairs of students. All but initial evaluation standard scores were available for twenty-seven pairs.

Survey instruments, rating scales and WRAT-R reliability and validity information are included in Appendix C.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Evaluation Question One: How effective is the career and life adjustment of graduates from EMH programs?

Rationale for Question Selection

As adults, most EMH students will be required to care for themselves and their families. They will need to know how to manage finances, manage a home, raise children, buy and prepare food, secure and maintain employment, manage their leisure time, and solve problems through appropriate interaction with others in the community. Thus, helping EMH students become as independent as possible is an important goal of the EMH program.

Current conditions in the United States make the goal of independence for the EMH individual difficult at best. Statistics show that:

(1) More than one million teens become pregnant each year;
(2) Young people under age 21 account for more than half of all arrests for serious crimes;
(3) A teenager commits suicide every 90 minutes;
(4) The U.S. average school noncompletion rate in 1983 was 26%;
(5) About 14 million children (including half of the black children and one-third of Hispanic children) live in poverty;
(6) Drug and alcohol abuse is up 60-fold since 1960; and,
(7) Teenage unemployment is up 35 percent for non-whites and 60 percent for whites since 1961 (to 40 percent for minority and 15 percent for white teenagers 16-19 years of age). [1]

Mentally handicapped youth are subjected to many of the same pressures as other youth and are likely to be less capable of handling the pressure. Also, they must compete for jobs with non-handicapped youth who cannot find employment. Evaluation Question One was included to determine how well the EMH program is preparing students to cope with current economic and social conditions.

---

[1] Business Advisory Commission of the Education Commission of the States, (1985, October), Reconnecting Youth.

Results of Evaluation

All special education cooperatives in Kansas were contacted to identify EMH graduate follow-up activities that were taking place in Kansas. Eight cooperatives responded. Of this group, four have no follow-up procedures in place, two have procedures which they find unsatisfactory, and two have extensive procedures and forms being used for follow-up. All were interested in receiving copies of procedures developed in Topeka.

The evaluator used materials sent by Wyandotte Comprehensive Special Education Cooperative as well as past Topeka studies to develop forms and procedures for Topeka. Teachers in the high school EMH programs were asked to review the forms and procedures and suggest changes. The finished product is in Appendix B.

A data base was created from the data individuals had collected on the EMH graduates from 1979 to 1985. Staff at the high schools then used the new procedures to gather follow-up data for three groups: current seniors, 1986 graduates, and 1982 graduates. These data were added to the data base. Finally, the data base was used to create the following reports.

Figure 2

WORK STUDY FOLLOW-UP REPORT
Summer 1987

Year Last Attended - 1982

Number of Students - 18

Male	10	White	10	Single	11
Female	8	Black	4	Married	3
		Hispanic	0	Divorced	1
		Asian	0	Separated	0
				Widowed	0

Graduate-

Yes	18
No	0

Living-

Alone	0
With spouse	3
With parents	9
In a group home	1
Military/School housing	0
Other Arrangment	0

Number of Children-

None	9
1 - 3	6
4 or more	0

Vocational Training-

Work Activity	2
Sheltered Employment	0
Work Adjustment	4
AVTS Skill Training	3
Job Corps	0
Military	1
Private Trade School	0

Adaptive Behavior Level-

High	6
Medium	2
Low	2

Achievement Level-

	Reading	Math
Below 3rd Grade	3	3
3rd - 6th Grade	7	7
Above 6th Grade	0	0

Working-

Yes	4
No	14

Weekly Salary-

Under $100	0
$100 - 200	2
$200 - 300	2
Over $400	0

SKILLED AREAS USED SINCE GRADUATION

	YES	NO
Employment Assistance	3	11
Vote	3	11
Public Transportation	7	7
Credit Application	3	11
Checking Account	2	12
Savings Account	7	7
Financial Assistance	7	7
Insurance	9	5
Drivers License	4	10

Figure 2
(continued)

WORK STUDY FOLLOW-UP REPORT
Summer 1987

Year Last Attended - 1986 | Number of Students - 11

Male	8	White	5	Single	11
Female	3	Black	3	Married	0
		Hispanic	0	Divorced	0
		Asian	0	Separated	0
				Widowed	0

Graduate-

Yes	10
No	1

Living-

Alone	0
With spouse	0
With parents	7
In a group home	0
Military/School housing	1
Other Arrangment	0

Number of Children-

None	9
1 - 3	1
4 or more	0

Vocational Training-

Work Activity	0
Sheltered Employment	1
Work Adjustment	4
AVTS Skill Training	3
Job Corps	2
Military	0
Private Trade School	0

Adaptive Behavior Level-

High	4
Medium	0
Low	4

Achievement Level-

	Reading	Math
Below 3rd Grade	1	2
3rd - 6th Grade	6	5
Above 6th Grade	0	0

Working-

Yes	5
No	6

Weekly Salary-

Under $100	2
$100 - 200	0
$200 - 300	0
Over $400	0

SKILLED AREAS USED SINCE GRADUATION

	YES	NO
Employment Assistance	2	9
Vote	1	10
Public Transportation	4	7
Credit Application	1	10
Checking Account	2	9
Savings Account	3	8
Financial Assistance	1	10
Insurance	1	10
Drivers License	3	8

Data entry screens have been created to add data to the data base at the end of each year. Reports can be generated from the data base by graduation year or for all years on the data base. As additional information is added, analyses can be made of such things as the effects of adaptive behavior level, achievement level and training on employment. Skill and lifestyle information can also be studied.

Not all information is available for each of the graduates. In the section titled 'Working', 'No' means not working or information not available.

The percent of the graduates who definitely had jobs is 22 percent for the 1982 graduates and 45 percent for the 1986 graduates. One possible reason for the difference could be that the graduates who lose their jobs after graduation do not know how to obtain another job without the support of their teachers.

During the 1977/78 school year, Highland Park High School had an average of twenty-five EMH students on jobs and Topeka High School had an average of thirteen EMH students on jobs. The students had a work coordinator to help them obtain and keep jobs. In 1986/87, there was no work coordinator, and only seniors received credit for working.

A survey of ninety-seven EMH 1969 through 1978 graduates, conducted in 1978 by Topeka special education staff, resulted in the following information:

Occupation		Living Arrangement	
*Currently not working or going to school:	12	Living at home:	33
Currently working:	46	Living with spouse:	9
Currently going to school:	3	Living alone:	8
Unable to locate:	36	Living in group home:	1
		Not given:	10

*Three were housewives with children.

The percent of graduates working was higher in the earlier survey than it is now. Functioning level differences of the graduates in the two studies and/or the difference in emphasis on work study between the two time periods could explain the results. Future follow-up studies might address this issue.

Twenty-five employers were sent questionnaires to obtain data about the EMH students they had hired in the last five years. Several of the employers had hired two or more EMH students, so employer responses were for the students in general. Ten employers responded to the questionnaire. The results are given in Figure 2b. On the average, employers were satisfied with the skills and behaviors of the EMH students.

Figure 2b

EMPLOYER QUESTIONNAIRE

How satisfied have you been with the performance of special education graduates in the following areas?

HS = Highly satisfied
S = Satisfied
U = Unsatisfied
HU = Highly unsatisfied
NS = Not sure or does not apply

		HS	S	U	HU	NS
1.	Ability to fill out a job application and other forms.	1	8	0	0	0
2.	Interaction with co-workers.	1	8	1	0	0
3.	Communication skills.	1	7	2	0	0
4.	Math Skills.	0	2	1	0	7
5.	Reading Skills.	0	2	2	0	6
6.	Attendance.	3	7	0	0	0
7.	Punctually.	2	8	0	0	0
8.	Appearance.	2	7	1	0	0
9.	Ability to follow directions.	1	7	2	0	0
10.	Ability to complete tasks on schedule.	2	6	2	0	0

11. What do you consider to be the major weaknesses of the special education students whom you have employed?
    Appearance,
    At times has difficulty when changes occur,
    Social skills,
    Working habits and behaviors,
    Knowledge of the meaning and importance of work.

12. Comments:
    Good employee
    Very cooperative

Evaluation Question Two: How can in-building job shadowing programs be expanded (K-12)?

Rationale for Question Selection

Behavior can keep an individual from getting a job or can cause the individual to be fired after he/she is hired. Work experiences in the school can help instill the habits and values needed for job success. For EMH children, it is important that the school impart these habits and values consistently and over a long period of time. It is also important for persons other than the special educators to be involved in the training program, since EMH students must learn to relate to those who know little about mental retardation.

Currently there is a limited in-building job shadowing program for EMH students. Students in the job shadowing program work with the maintenance staff or work in the cafeteria. The program has been successful; however, many students do not have the opportunity to participate due to limited job shadowing slots. The purpose of Evaluation Question Two was to check the feasibility of expanding the in-building job shadowing program.

Results of Evaluation

Fifteen EMH staff members were asked to describe some in-school job shadowing experiences that their EMH students could handle effectively. Five teachers, with no students involved in job shadowing, thought that their students could possibly handle working in the cafeteria, with the janitors, or as proctors. However, two of the five thought their students were too young to begin work training, two stated that in-school jobs were only given to regular students, and one felt that learning academic skills was more important at the elementary level.

Three teachers said that they set up job stations in their classrooms, and six said that a few of their students were currently working in the lunchroom or as custodial helpers. One of these teachers would like to add training stations in the library, office and copy center, to the custodial and cafeteria stations.

Reasons given for not emphasizing job shadowing included:

1. Students are already out of the room for occupational therapy music therapy, adaptive P.E., library, speech, etc,. which leaves little time to work with them on academics.

2. Placements would require one to one supervision, and there is no staff available for such supervision.

3. There are not enough special education staff members to supply the initial training required for successful placement.

4. A strong job shadowing program requires a great deal of administration support, and some building administrators do not value the program.

5. Many in-school jobs are given to regular education students as rewards for good grades or good behavior.

Teachers in interrelated classes seemed less interested in job shadowing than teachers in self-contained classes. Several stated that they felt compelled to stress academics, since many of their students would return to regular education in high school or sooner.

Teachers interested in job shadowing thought that their students could work in copy centers and as aides in the library, counselor's office, and main office as well as work with the janitors and in the cafeteria. They said that such work experience is important, since few of the middle and high school age students have jobs outside of school. However, the teachers did not think the job shadowing program could be improved without increased administrator support.

Evaluation Question Three: To what extent do EMH students profit from mainstreaming?

Rationale for Question Selection

The population in the EMH program is changing. There are many reasons for the change--including identification procedures that are more culturally fair and early intervention programs--but the effect is that many children who were once classified as being mildly mentally retarded are no longer classified as EMH. The openings left in the EMH program are being filled by more seriously handicapped students.[2] The purpose of Evaluation Question Three was to determine (1) the percent of EMH students who are being integrated into regular education classes; (2) if EMH students who are being integrated into regular education are integrated into academic or nonacademic classes; (3) if mainstreaming is relevant to the new population of EMH students; and (4) what benefits EMH students are receiving from mainstreaming.

[2] Polloway, Edward, and Smith, J.D., (1983, October). Changes in mild mental retardation: population, programs, and perspectives.

Results of Evaluation*

The EMH staff was asked, "To what degree does the general education staff accept the integration of mentally handicapped students into regular school programs and activities?" They answered that the general education teachers are very accepting (5); some of the teachers are very accepting, but others feel overwhelmed with their own problems (4); the teachers individualize work for special education students and grade on ability (4); teachers are very accepting if students are mainstreamed for subjects which do not require high level math and reading skills (1); and students are only mainstreamed for non-academic subjects because they are much older than students of the same ability level, although the teachers will take EMH students for reading or math (1).

When asked if there are certain approaches, techniques, or practices which are useful in facilitating mainstreaming, EMH teachers responded:

1. Communicate with regular education teachers frequently (5);
2. Talk to the regular education teacher at great length before mainstreaming (4);
3. Know the situation in the regular education class before mainstreaming (4);
4. Do not mainstream until certain that EMH student's behavior will be appropriate and student is confident about ability to handle class (4);
5. Support regular education teachers and let them know that students who are not working out in regular education will be removed immediately (2);
6. Provide regular education teachers with weekly progress report checklists so that problems can be alleviated as soon as they arise (2);
7. Furnish a paraprofessional (1);
8. Teach regular education teachers behavior modification techniques (1);
9. Have the regular education teachers talk to their students about the mainstreaming before it takes place (1);
10. Become visible in the halls and in the teachers' lounge (1);
11. Send only one student per hour to a teacher (1);
12. Do team teaching with a regular education teacher (1);
13. Enroll student in a regular education class without letting teacher know the student is EMH and then talk to the teacher after a week to see how student is doing (1);
14. Offer in-services about mainstreaming to administrators (1).

According to EMH staff, many of their students participate in sports, advisor base, chorus and field trips and attend games, assemblies and dances. Occasionally, teachers must remind staff planning school activities that special education would like to be included. Also, some of the special education students need teacher encouragement and support to participate in school activities.

* Numbers in parentheses represent the number of teachers giving the responses.

When asked how well regular education students accept special education students, five teachers said their schools had made a special effort to remove special education labels so that special students would be accepted. Some of the EMH staff said they sponsor school activities or use regular education students as aides because they feel the more the regular education students are in their rooms, the more understanding they become. Only one teacher stated that her students had little positive contact with regular education students. Another felt that attitudes were still rather negative, but improving.

Teachers felt that three major factors affected regular student acceptance of special education students:

1. Acting out behavior or extremely introverted behavior on the part of special education students encouraged others to laugh at, tease or ignore them.
2. Regular education students who had little self-confidence were most apt to torment special education students.
3. Regular education students were often as accepting of persons with differences as their teachers were.

To the question, "What changes has participation in the regular education program made on special education students in your class?", EMH staff noted the following positive outcomes:

Students--

1. enjoy being in the regular education classes;
2. begin to feel better about themselves;
3. gain maturity and begin to demand better behavior in the special education class;
4. get to know other teachers and students;
5. help regular education students become more understanding of individual differences; and
6. begin to model themselves after regular education students which improves socialization skills.

The only negative outcome mentioned was that a few students stop working in the special education class after they are mainstreamed. Since being mainstreamed is usually a positive experience, some teachers said they used mainstreaming as a reward for good behavior and successful completion of academic tasks.

Forty out of sixty-seven regular education teachers who were sent a survey instrument about mainstreaming responded to the instrument. The following figure describes the respondents.

Figure 3

REGULAR EDUCATION TEACHER DEMOGRAPHICS

Years of Teaching Experience:

Years	No.
0 - 3	3
4 - 7	4
8 - 11	7
12 or more	25
Unknown	1

Courses in Special Education:

Courses	No.
0 - 1	10
2 - 3	16
4 - 5	8
6 or more	4
Unknown	2

Teaching Level:

Level	No.
Grade School	8
Middle School	14
High School	17
Unknown	1

Results of the survey were analyzed, using the chi-square statistic, to determine if there were a relationship between years of teaching experience, number of courses in special education, or teaching level and responses to questions. No relationship was found. Figure 4 describes the outcome of the survey. A copy of the survey instrument, titled Staff Survey for EMH Evaluation, is included in Appendix C.

Figure 4

REGULAR EDUCATION STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

		Strongly Agree	Agree	No Opinion	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. Mainstreaming creates positive changes in regular student's attitudes.	NO.	5	25	3	6	1
	PCT.	12.5	62.5	7.5	15	2.5
2. Regular and special education teachers communicate and plan together.	NO.	2	19	4	10	5
	PCT.	5	47.5	10	25	12.5
3. Special education teachers understand the realities of the regular ed. classroom.	NO.	3	17	6	9	5
	PCT.	7.5	42.5	15	22.5	12.5
4. EMH students are only mainstreamed into appropriate classes.	NO.	5	17	7	9	2
	PCT.	12.5	42.5	17.5	22.5	5
5. Mainstreaming creates educational advancements.	NO.	2	17	18	3	0
	PCT.	5	42.5	45	7.5	0
6. Regular education students should be sensitized before mainstreaming.	NO.	5	15	15	4	1
	PCT.	12.5	37.5	37.5	10	2.5
7. Mainstreaming can bring about long-term benefits.	NO.	10	18	10	1	1
	PCT.	25	45	25	2.5	2.5
		Always	Usually	Sometimes	Never	Not Sure
8. Special education teachers prepare regular education teachers before placements.	NO.	5	9	10	15	1
	PCT.	12.5	22.5	25	37.5	2.5

9. Mentally handicapped students can be successfully mainstreamed into:

	NO.	PCT.
Academic Areas	16	40
Art	28	70
Music	30	75
Physical Education	33	82.5
Home Economics	21	52.5
Pre-Vocational & Vocational Education	16	40

-16-
Figure 4
REGULAR EDUCATION STAFF SURVEY RESULTS

Figure 4 shows that regular education teachers agree with special education teachers on the possible positive effects of mainstreaming. The EMH staff identified communication with regular education staff and knowledge of the regular education class as important components to successful mainstreaming. About half of the regular education teachers believe that communication is taking place. More than a third of the regular education teachers indicated that they do not communicate or plan with the EMH staff, that they are not prepared by the EMH teacher to work with a student before mainstreaming and that special education teachers do not understand and respond to the realities of the regular education teacher's situation. Comments given by regular education teachers listed social gains from increased peer contacts and improved self-concepts on the part of EMH students as the major benefits of mainstreaming and lack of information or assistance from special education teachers as the major drawbacks.

Over 90 percent of the high school EMH students satisfactorily completed the requirements of their first semester mainstream classes this year. (Completion data were not collected at the grade and middle school levels.) The figure below shows percent of EMH students mainstreamed by the number of hours mainstreamed per day during the 1986-87 school year. Most of the mainstreaming was to non-academic classes, such as physical education, music, shop and art. Math and reading labs were the academic classes most often used.

Figure 5

PERCENT OF STUDENTS MAINSTREAMED

	Level		
Hours Daily	Grade School	Middle School	High School
0	33	0	0
1	58	64	62
2	7	27	26
3	2	0	10
4	0	7	0
5	0	2	2
6	0	0	0

Evaluation Question Four: Does the district have sufficient placement alternatives for EMH students?

Rationale for Question Selection

The Topeka school district has special education programs for children who are educable mentally handicapped, trainable mentally handicapped, deaf-blind, multiply handicapped, orthopedically handicapped, gifted-academically talented, learning disabled, hearing impaired, visually impaired, and behaviorally maladjusted. In addition, the district offers supportive services in psychology, social work, speech therapy, physical education, music therapy, and homebound instruction.

Placement into a class is usually based on a student's primary disability. Thus, an educable mentally handicapped student is often placed in a program for EMH students, even if that student is also handicapped in another way. For example, if a student is mentally handicapped and behaviorally disordered, the student's placement will be EMH, since retardation is considered the primary handicap. Evaluation Question Four was meant to study whether or not the current placement system is the most practical one for students and staff.

Results of Evaluation

Six of the EMH teachers interviewed were coordinating instruction with other special education teachers so that they could do ability grouping and/or separate troublesome students. Two others had no major problem with current placement options. Suggestions for improving placements, which came from the remaining staff members included--

1. Place EMH classrooms in schools with least crowded regular education classrooms to enhance the possibility of mainstreaming.
2. Make more of an effort to place high functioning EMH students into interrelated classes and low functioning EMH students into self-contained classes, regardless of where they live.
3. Provide BD teacher services or create BD/EMH classrooms for emotionally disturbed EMH students.
4. Remove extremely disturbed BD students from interrelated classrooms.
5. Release a teacher at each high school part time so that they can assist EMH students find and maintain employment, since employment training should be an important component of an EMH student's education.
6. Encourage administrators to set up more job shadowing stations for EMH students, for the same reason mentioned in No. 5.

Because of the mixed messages coming from the EMH staff about the importance of vocational and life skill training and opportunities available to EMH students to receive this training, teachers were asked what importance they placed on vocational and life skill training. Most of the elementary and middle school teachers interviewed said that they tried to integrate vocational and life skill training into all subject areas to some extent, but that academics were most important at the level they taught. Middle school teachers added that vocational training was not stressed in the middle school curriculum, and that materials were not available to work in this area. Half of these teachers felt that more vocational and life skill training was needed for EMH students. However, many had interrelated classes and said they had to continue emphasizing academics for the LD and BD students in their classrooms.

Teachers at the high school level said that they relate all classroom activities to work. In addition, they cooperate with the Vocational Rehabilitation Unit (VRU) to get sophomores, juniors, and seniors ready for work. Although there are no work coordinators at the high schools, seniors do get credit for working, and teachers said that they assist students with work-related problems as much as possible. These teachers suggested that juniors should get a credit for working and that a teacher at each high school should get release time to help students obtain and hold jobs.

In order to study whether the current placement options were working for EMH students, the evaluator observed two self-contained EMH classrooms and four interrelated classrooms for a total of ten hours.* Classrooms included all special education levels except high school. In most cases, students were observed before teachers were asked which children needed a different kind of placement. (At times it was apparent which children were having problems because they were separated from the other children.) The evaluator then asked teachers to point out the children whose placements were of most concern to them. Although teachers sometimes identified additional children, all students selected as subjects for observation by the evaluator were identified as misplaced students by the teachers. Figure 6 combines evaluator observations with teacher recommendations for placement.

* NOTE: Suggestions for classrooms to observe come from EMH staff members.

Figure 6

RESULTS OF OBSERVATION

Total Number of Students in Class During Observation	Teacher's Classification of Student	Teacher's Recommended Placement	Evaluator Observation
Class I 15 EMH Students	1. EMH/BD	EMH/BD Classroom	1a. Works only when para or teacher gives individual attention. 1b. Constantly disrupts class.
	2. EMH/BD	EMH/BD Classroom	2a. Works only when para or teacher gives individual attention. 2b. Throws frequent temper tantrums for attention.
	3. EMH/BD	EMH/BD Classroom	3a. Pretends to fall out of chair, talks, and frequently moves around room to get classmate attention.
Class II 12 Interrelated Students	1. EMH Low Functioning	EMH Classroom	1a. Concentrates only 30 seconds at a time. (In 15 minutes, stayed on task one minute.) 1b. Looks around room with hand raised most of period because unable to remember directions after teacher leaves. 1c. Rapidly and incorrectly completes work in order to have something to turn in.

-20-
Figure 6
RESULTS OF OBSERVATION

Figure 6
(continued)
RESULTS OF OBSERVATION

Total Number of Students in Class During Observation	Teacher's Classification of Student	Teacher's Recommended Placement	Evaluator Observation
Class II 12 Interrelated Students	2. EMH Low Functioning	EMH Classroom	2a. Continually gets out of seat or talks to classmates. 2b. When reprimanded, sits quietly for a few minutes, but does not work.
	3. EMH Low Functioning	EMH Classroom	3a. Spends time looking at shoe, playing with pencil, shuffling papers. 3b. Works only with individual assistance.
Class III 12 Interrelated Students	1. EMH Low Functioning	EMH Classroom	1a. Raises hand during class discussion but has no answers when called on. 1b. Unable to follow directions given to class for written work. 1c. Although in interrelated 3/4 class, cannot give first letter of alphabet, read words like "eat" and "cat", find page 99 in a book, or follow a direction, like "count down three lines"; thus, rest of class must wait while teacher helps him with each activity.
Class IV 9 Interrelated Students Remaining: (4 removed: 1 suspended, 1 to Capital City, 1 to homebound, and 1 to foster living situation in Kansas City).		No placement problem noted. Students removed needed SD placement.	

-21-
Figure 6
(continued)

Figure 6
(continued)
RESULTS OF OBSERVATION

Total Number of Student in Class During Observation	Teacher's Classification of Student	Teacher's Recommended Placement	Evaluator Observation
Class V 11 Interrelated Students	1. EMH Low Functioning	EMH Classroom	1a. Raises hand during classroom discussions, but can't answer questions even with numerous hints. 1b. Must have directions repeated to him after rest of class begins to work.
	2. BD	BD Classroom	2a. Sits in back of room at study carol during class, making noises with mouth, folding papers, or slouching in chair and daydreaming. Totally ignores what is happening in class. 2b. Passively resists paras attempts to get him to work.
Class VI 12 EMH Students	1. EMH High Functioning	Interrelated Classroom	1a. Completes assignments before rest of class gets started. Sits quietly.
	2. EMH/BD	EMH/BD Classroom	2a. Participates in class only when asked to do so. 2b. Stares out window and wanders around room, totally ignoring everyone else in class.
	3. EMH High Functioning (LD until this year)	Interrelated Classroom	3a. Completes work easily and works ahead in book.
	4. EMH Low Functioning	TMH Classroom	4a. Although in middle school, can't read 3-letter words and has difficulty counting. 4b. Must have individual attention to complete work.

-22-
Figure 6
(continued)

Evaluation Question Five: How can we make the identification and placement process (including IEP) more meaningful for students and parents?

Rationale for Question Selection

By law, parents of special education students must be fully informed of their rights and appeal procedures and should be active, informed participants in the development of their children's IEPs. In order for parent participation to be meaningful, parents must understand their options and develop a good working relationship with the district's special education department. Parent attitudes toward their child's education plan may affect that child's acceptance of special education placement.

Students need to understand why they were placed in special education and the plan that was developed to guide their education. It is important for the students to internalize the objectives on the IEP so that they will direct their energies to achieving the objectives. The purpose of Evaluation Question Five was to discover how the IEP process can be made more meaningful for teachers, parents and students.

Results of Evaluation

The evaluator was able to attend only five IEP conferences. The parents attending the conferences said that their children's test results and present class performance were clearly explained, that they were told their rights and given a sheet explaining rights and appeal procedures, that they felt comfortable expressing their ideas during the conferences, and that their ideas were considered in the development of the IEP. Four of the parents could explain why IEP conferences were held. The fifth spoke limited English and could not respond to the question. (Interpreter was not provided for conference.) None of the parents could offer any suggestions for obtaining more parent involvement in the development of the education plan. The parents said that they were happy with their children's current placements and that their children liked their programs and were doing well. The three students present at the conferences agreed that they were happy with their placements.

The parents asked a few questions when they did not understand something on the IEP, but they offered no suggestions for changes. They agreed with all the teacher recommendations, as did the students.

The EMH staff members who were interviewed by the evaluator were asked how effective the IEPs were in changing the social and educational performance of students. Four staff members said that they found IEPs useful, three said that they were sometimes useful, three said they were a waste of time, and two said that IEPs were important to protect the district legally, but served no other purpose.

Staff comments about IEPs included: (1) teachers are given no training on how to write them; (2) previous teachers sometimes send incomplete IEPs; (3) because a teacher writes objectives according to the way he or she structures class and according to materials used in that classroom, they are not very useful to the next teacher; (4) IEPs are just another example of useless paperwork; (5) a student's current teacher would have had to be involved in the previous year's IEP conference for the IEP to be meaningful; (6) sometimes objectives are inappropriate and must be changed; (7) most parents give little input, preferring to agree with whatever the teacher suggests; (8) IEP conferences are an unacceptable way of meeting parents for the first time because the formality and jargon of the conferences makes parents very uncomfortable; (9) students don't understand their IEPs; and (10) IEPs are inappropriate at the middle school level because students are leveling out academically and need to become involved in group activities for socialization and life and vocational skill development.

Two teachers did think that IEPs helped keep parents informed of their children's progress, one felt that IEPs helped students set goals for themselves, and one thought IEPs gave teachers a plan of action and showed teachers how far a student had come. One teacher suggested placing learning objectives for the different areas on continuums, keeping track of where each student was functioning along each continuum and setting goals by stating expected step increases.

Evaluation Question Six: In what way are children who are appropriately placed in an EMH program better off than they would have been if they had remained in regular education?

Rationale for Question Selection

Evaluation Question Six is the fundamental question of any special education program. If children are not better off in the special classes than they would have been if left in regular education, there is no reason to place children in special education.

The EMH program works with students in areas such as personal adjustment, social interaction, vocational development, behavior modeling, and life skills as well as on academics. The broad curriculum was developed to meet the unique needs of EMH students. Thus, an evaluation of the benefits of the program must consider the varied emphases of the program.

There is no true comparison group to use in the study of this question. However, there are students who were tested for placement but were never placed in an EMH class. Most of these students were found to be slow learners rather than EMH, but students in both groups share many characteristics. Thus, the slow learner group was used as a comparison group.

Results of Evaluation

From kindergarten through grade eight, teachers seemed to be concentrating on teaching basic academic skills to EMH students. In the ten hours of evaluator observation, only one of the hours was directly related to vocational/life skills training. Some teachers were using science, social studies, reading, and math books from regular education classes in their classes. Students were grouped according to ability, and the groups were smaller than they would have been in regular education. Also, some of the teachers had established monetary systems and assigned jobs to students. Basically, however, a unique curriculum based on EMH student needs could not be identified during the observations.

Elementary and middle school EMH teachers said that academics were stressed in the curriculum at their levels, that teaching many of the same things as regular education teachers was necessary in interrelated classes because some of the students would return to regular education, and that they lacked materials to teach pre-vocational and life skills. They said they tried to relate what they were teaching to jobs and adult life.

A study was conducted, as part of the evaluation, comparing a group of EMH students with a matched group of regular education students. Students were matched on grade level, sex, and IQ scores obtained during each student's initial evaluation for the EMH program. The evaluator began the study with thirty matched pairs.

Each student was given the Wide Range Achievement Test (WRAT-R) and was asked a series of forty questions dealing with attitudes about school, teachers, and own ability to learn. Each student's language arts teacher was asked to complete a survey instrument about student school adjustment. Only two regular education students were not tested. One of the students had dropped out of school and the other preferred not to participate.

Student files were searched to find achievement standard scores in math, reading recognition, and spelling, which were obtained during the initial evaluation. In addition, the evaluator recorded the years since the evaluation. A total of nineteen pairs of students' records included all the information needed for the study.

Figure 7 represents the teacher and student responses to the attitude surveys. Although, paired T-Tests showed that there were not significant differences between the two groups on most items, responses to the following items were significantly different at the .05 level of signifiance:

(1) Teachers of special education students were more likely to say that their students initiated classroom discussion, tormented or teased classmates, and broke school rules than teachers of the regular education students.

(2) EMH students were more likely to say that they liked to answer questions in class than their regular education counterparts.

(3) Regular education students, gave significantly more positive responses than EMH students to statements about their ability to make friends and to get along with others.

(4) Regular education students were also more apt to respond affirmatively to the statements "school days seem to last forever" and "I wish I didn't have to go to school."

Crosstabulations and T-Tests were run on the total number of students who completed the survey instrument with the same items being significant. The results suggest that the EMH students liked school better and were less apprehensive about taking part in classroom discussions than the regular education students; however, their socialization skills were weaker.

Figure 7

DISCUSSION/INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Teacher Statements and Responses

How often does the student--		1	2	3	4	5	$\bar{X}$
1. Give an answer that has nothing to do with question being asked?	Sp.Ed.	3	7	2	2	4	2.8
	Reg.Ed.	5	7	5	0	1	2.2
2. Jump from one thought to another when telling something?	Sp.Ed.	1	11	3	1	2	2.6
	Reg.Ed.	4	7	1	4	0	2.3
3. Avoid involvement and communication with others?	Sp.Ed.	5	6	4	3	0	2.3
	Reg.Ed.	5	5	3	2	2	2.5
*4. Initiate classroom discussion?	Sp.Ed.	3	3	8	3	1	2.8
	Reg.Ed.	8	5	3	2	0	1.9
5. Make irrelevant remarks during a classroom discussion?	Sp.Ed.	3	3	6	2	4	3.1
	Reg.Ed.	8	6	0	2	2	2.1
6. Just sit and not participate?	Sp.Ed.	1	6	6	1	4	3.1
	Reg.Ed.	1	4	3	1	9	3.7
7. Get easily confused in discussions or when answering a question?	Sp.Ed.	1	6	3	3	5	3.3
	Reg.Ed.	1	5	8	1	3	3.0
8. Work well with peers?	Sp.Ed.	1	2	7	5	3	3.4
	Reg.Ed.	2	1	5	5	4	3.5
*9. Torment or tease classmates?	Sp.Ed.	2	6	2	2	6	3.2
	Reg.Ed.	9	3	3	0	3	2.2

Response Key

5 = Very Frequently 4 = Average 3 = Occasionally

2 = Rarely 1 = Never $\bar{X}$ = Mean

* Significant difference, at the .05 probability level, between responses for regular and special education students.

Figure 7
(continued)

DISCUSSION/INTERACTIONS WITH OTHERS

Student Statements and Responses

			1	2	3	$\bar{X}$
*1.	I like to answer questions in class.	Sp.Ed.	11	3	3	1.5
		Reg.Ed.	7	2	9	2.1
2.	Teachers and other students think the ideas I share in class are good ones.	Sp.Ed.	9	5	3	1.6
		Reg.Ed.	8	5	5	1.8
3.	I like to be called on in class.	Sp.Ed.	8	5	3	1.7
		Reg.Ed.	7	0	10	2.2
4.	I wish I were someone else.	Sp.Ed.	2	2	12	2.6
		Reg.Ed.	3	2	12	2.5
5.	I like to work with other kids on class projects.	Sp.Ed.	17	0	0	1.0
		Reg.Ed.	17	0	1	1.1
6.	Other kids like me.	Sp.Ed.	13	3	1	1.3
		Reg.Ed.	11	3	4	1.6
*7.	I should get along better with other kids than I do.	Sp.Ed.	13	1	2	1.3
		Reg.Ed.	7	0	10	2.2
8.	My teachers usually like me.	Sp.Ed.	16	1	0	1.1
		Reg.Ed.	13	2	3	1.4
9.	Other kids are often mean to me.	Sp.Ed.	9	1	7	1.9
		Reg.Ed.	8	0	10	2.1
10.	I am popular with kids my own age.	Sp.Ed.	10	3	3	1.6
		Reg.Ed.	9	4	4	1.7
11.	I am friendly toward other people.	Sp.Ed.	14	1	1	1.2
		Reg.Ed.	15	1	1	1.2
*12.	It is hard for me to make friends.	Sp.Ed.	7	4	6	1.9
		Reg.Ed.	4	0	14	2.6

Response Key

1 = Always True 2 = Sometimes True 3 = Untrue $\bar{X}$ = Mean

* Significant differences, at the .05 probability level, between responses of regular and special education students.

Figure 7
(continued)

GENERAL SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

Teacher Statements and Responses

How often does the student--		1	2	3	4	5	$\bar{X}$
*1. Break classroom rules?	Sp.Ed.	1	4	5	3	5	3.4
	Reg.Ed.	6	3	6	2	1	2.4

Response Key

5 = Very Frequently 4 = Average 3 = Occasionally

2 = Rarely 1 = Never $\bar{X}$ = Mean

*Significant difference, at the .05 probability level, between responses for regular and special education students.

Figure 7
(continued)

GENERAL SCHOOL ADJUSTMENT

Student Statements and Responses

			1	2	3	$\bar{X}$
1.	My teacher notices me only when I do something wrong.	Sp.Ed.	4	3	9	2.3
		Reg.Ed.	6	3	8	2.1
2.	I usually follow school rules.	Sp.Ed.	14	2	1	1.2
		Reg.Ed.	14	3	1	1.3
*3.	Most school days seem like they will never end.	Sp.Ed.	8	0	8	2.0
		Reg.Ed.	14	0	3	1.3
*4.	I wish I didn't have to go to school.	Sp.Ed.	4	0	13	2.5
		Reg.Ed.	10	2	6	1.8
5.	A person doesn't have to finish school to get a good job.	Sp.Ed.	3	1	12	2.6
		Reg.Ed.	4	1	12	2.5
6.	Only the students that teachers like get good grades.	Sp.Ed.	5	1	10	2.3
		Reg.Ed.	3	1	13	2.6
7.	Good teachers are the ones that don't make you do much work.	Sp.Ed.	4	0	12	2.5
		Reg.Ed.	4	0	13	2.5
8.	I'm sure school will help me have a better life.	Sp.Ed.	16	0	0	1.0
		Reg.Ed.	16	0	1	1.1

Response Key

1 = Always True 2 = Sometimes True 3 = Untrue $\bar{X}$ = Mean

* Significant difference, at the .05 probability level, between responses for regular and special education students.

Figure 7
(continued)

CONFIDENCE IN LEARNING ABILITY

Teacher Statements and Responses

How often does the student--		1	2	3	4	5	$\bar{X}$
1. Show worry or get anxious about knowing the "right" answer?	Sp.Ed.	2	4	5	4	3	3.1
	Reg.Ed.	4	5	5	2	2	2.6
2. Get upset or angry when having difficulty understanding something?	Sp.Ed.	2	7	6	1	2	2.7
	Reg.Ed.	5	4	5	2	2	2.6

Response Key

5 = Very Frequently 4 = Average 3 = Occasionally

2 = Rarely 1 = Never $\bar{X}$ = Mean

Figure 7
(continued)

CONFIDENCE IN LEARNING ABILITY

Student Statements and Responses

		1	2	3	$\bar{X}$
1. I understand what the teacher wants us to do.	Op.Ed.	13	4	0	1.2
	Reg.Ed.	13	3	2	1.4
2. I often feel upset at school.	Op.Ed.	6	4	7	2.1
	Reg.Ed.	6	4	8	2.1
3. I'm not very smart.	Op.Ed.	7	5	4	1.8
	Reg.Ed.	5	3	9	2.2
4. I forget most of what I learn.	Op.Ed.	7	2	7	2.0
	Reg.Ed.	5	4	8	2.2
5. I can't do things right at school.	Op.Ed.	1	5	10	2.6
	Reg.Ed.	4	4	9	2.3
6. I am slow in finishing my school work.	Op.Ed.	8	3	6	1.9
	Reg.Ed.	4	5	9	2.3
7. I am proud of my school work.	Op.Ed.	16	0	1	1.1
	Reg.Ed.	14	3	1	1.3
8. Kids think that I am a poor student.	Op.Ed.	2	4	10	2.5
	Reg.Ed.	2	0	15	2.8
9. The teachers have time to help me.	Op.Ed.	16	1	0	1.1
	Reg.Ed.	15	2	1	1.2
10. I have to hurry to finish my work.	Op.Ed.	7	2	8	2.1
	Reg.Ed.	5	1	12	2.4
11. I often think that I'm going to fail. fail in school.	Op.Ed.	4	2	10	2.4
	Reg.Ed.	7	2	8	2.1
12. I usually have time to finish my work.	Op.Ed.	13	2	1	1.3
	Reg.Ed.	14	1	2	1.3
13. It's hard to memorize things for school.	Op.Ed.	8	2	6	1.9
	Reg.Ed.	5	4	8	2.2
14. School work is pretty easy for me.	Op.Ed.	8	8	1	1.6
	Reg.Ed.	7	6	4	1.8
15. I can get good grades if I want to.	Op.Ed.	14	1	2	1.3
	Reg.Ed.	15	1	2	1.3

Response Key

1 = Always True 2 = Sometimes True 3 = Untrue $\bar{X}$ = Mean

Figure 7
(continued)

ABILITY TO STAY ON TASK

Teacher Statements and Responses

How often does the student--		1	2	3	4	5	$\bar{X}$
1. Forget the directions that are given?	Sp.Ed.	1	4	6	3	4	3.3
	Reg.Ed.	0	2	6	6	4	3.7
2. Make you doubt whether he or she is paying attention?	Sp.Ed.	1	2	6	4	5	3.6
	Reg.Ed.	1	2	6	1	8	3.7
3. Complete assignments on time?	Sp.Ed.	1	6	3	3	5	3.3
	Reg.Ed.	3	4	3	5	3	3.1
4. Persist when something is difficult or demands more than the usual effort?	Sp.Ed.	1	5	9	0	3	2.9
	Reg.Ed.	3	5	4	4	2	2.8
5. Only work when someone is giving individual help?	Sp.Ed.	3	5	3	6	1	2.8
	Reg.Ed.	5	5	1	1	6	2.9
6. Stay with a task when other activities are going on in the same room?	Sp.Ed.	3	1	4	7	3	3.3
	Reg.Ed.	2	6	3	7	0	2.8

Response Key

5 = Very Frequently 4 = Average 3 = Occasionally

2 = Rarely 1 = Never $\bar{X}$ = Mean

Figure 7
(continued)

ABILITY TO STAY ON TASK

Student Statements and Responses

		1	2	3	$\bar{X}$
1. I often give up when trying to do my work at school.	Sp.Ed.	5	3	8	2.2
	Reg.Ed.	3	3	11	2.5
2. My teachers don't explain things very well.	Sp.Ed.	5	1	10	2.3
	Reg.Ed.	2	3	12	2.6
3. I'm afraid to tell the teachers when I don't understand something.	Sp.Ed.	5	2	9	2.3
	Reg.Ed.	5	0	12	2.4
4. As soon as the teacher starts talking, I begin to daydream.	Sp.Ed.	2	4	10	2.5
	Reg.Ed.	2	1	14	2.7
5. I sometimes don't pay attention in school because the work is too hard.	Sp.Ed.	5	4	7	2.1
	Reg.Ed.	3	1	13	2.6

Response Key

1 = Always True 2 = Sometimes True 3 = Untrue $\bar{X}$ = Mean

The major constraints to the study in measuring achievement differences were as follows:

1. Students of similar IQs are not randomly placed in either an EMH or regular education classroom. The factors which influence the decision about placement(i.e. student motivation, ability to adapt to the situation, and learning style) might significantly affect how a student performs in school. Although IQ and years since initial evaluation were taken into consideration when computing differences in academic achievement gains, it was impossible to control for all factors which could have affected achievement.

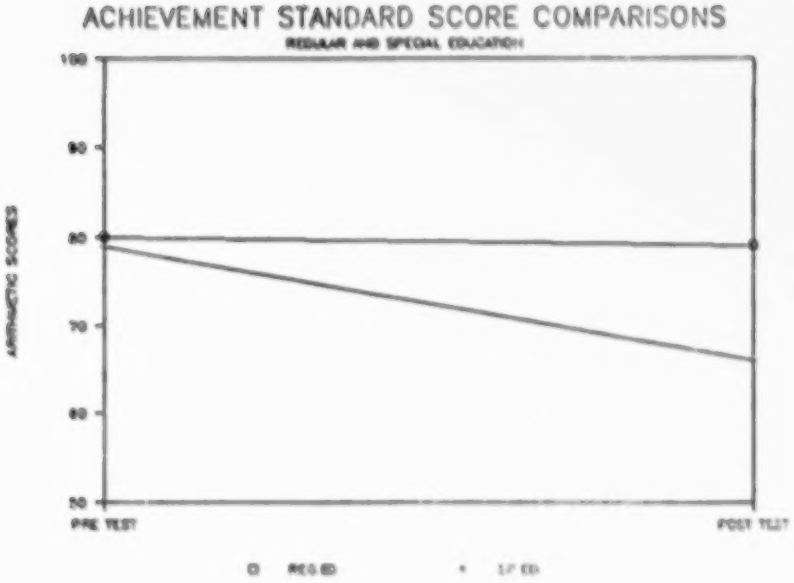
2. Different pre-test instruments were used. The Wide Range Achievement Test - Revised (WRAT-R) was used as a pre-test measure for 75 percent of the students. The PIAT was the pre-test instrument used to measure achievement for the remaining students. According to the WRAT-R manual, in 20 different studies involving over 1,000 subjects, the WRAT correlated with the PIAT in Reading Recognition at an average of .87, in Spelling at an average of .75, and in Arithmetic at an average of .66. (See Appendix C.) Because of the high correlation and the fact that standard scores - which are supposedly comparable - were used, hopefully differences due to test utilization were minimized.

3. In order to be able to match EMH students to students in regular education, only EMH students with relatively high IQs were included in the study. Thus, results can be generalized to only high functioning EMH students.

Figure 8 displays the average pre- and post-test standard scores for the regular and EMH students in reading recognition, math, and spelling. Paired T-Tests showed that there was not a significant difference in pre-test math and reading scores between the groups.* However, there were significant differences between the groups in all post-tests. There was also a significant difference in IQ (72 for EMH and 77 for regular education students).

* All significant differences in the study are at the .05 level.

Figure 8


ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD SCORE COMPARISONS
REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION
ARITHMETIC SCORES
100
90
80
70
60
50
PRE TEST
POST TEST

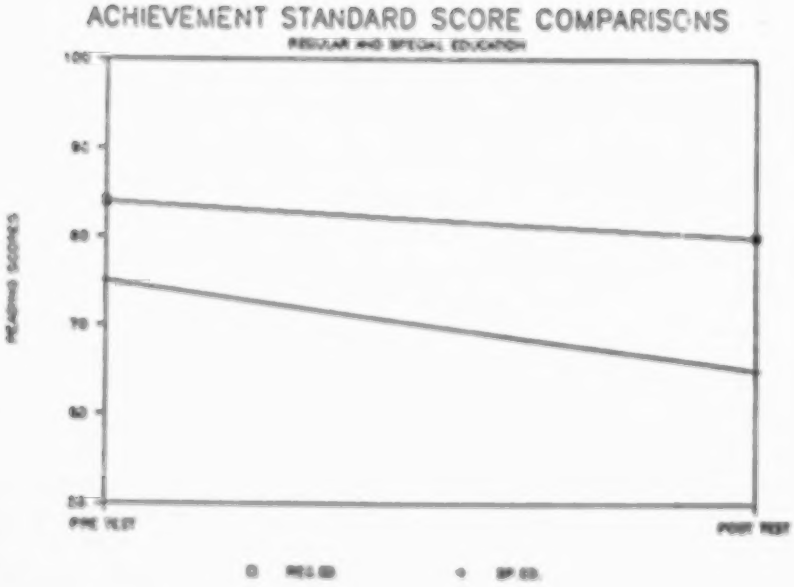
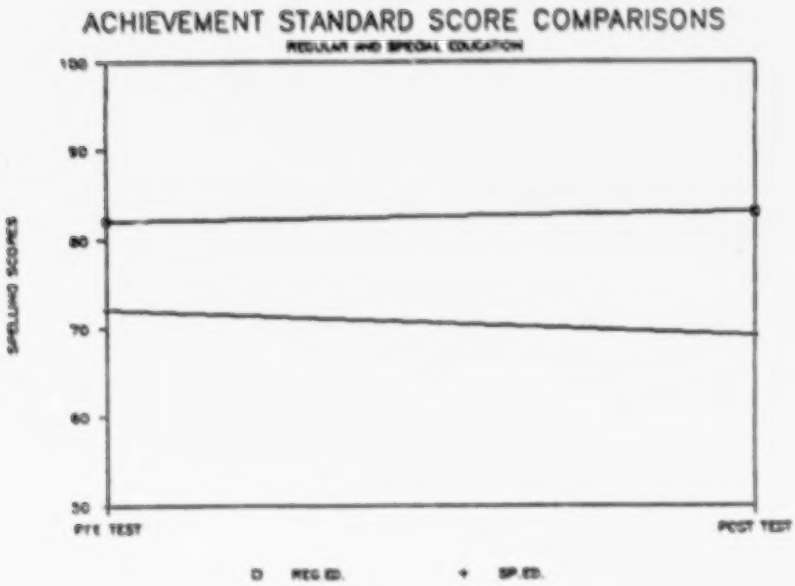

ACHIEVEMENT STANDARD SCORE COMPARISONS
REGULAR AND SPECIAL EDUCATION
READING SCORES
100
90
80
70
60
50
PRE TEST
POST TEST

Figure 8
(continued)



An analysis of covariance was run on the achievement scores, controlling for IQ and years since the evaluation. There were no significant interaction effects for years or IQ. Achievement gain differences between groups were significant in the three subject areas.

Evaluation Question Seven: How is the education an EMR student receives affected by that student's placement in an interrelated classroom?

Interrelated classrooms allow grouping according to behavioral characteristics and remove some of the labelling of children. However, there is some discussion about the relevance of one curriculum for several exceptionalities. For example, should the curriculum for the mentally handicapped child emphasize academic remediation, as does the curriculum for the learning disabled, or should it emphasize social and vocational development? How does the teacher in an interrelated class adapt the curriculum to meet the needs of the different exceptionalities?

Another concern voiced about the interrelated classroom is the fear that the EMH student may not receive as much instruction time as BD and LD students. Teachers often find that some students are very demanding of attention and can monopolize classroom time. In these situations, less demanding students are left to complete worksheets or do other tasks that can be completed alone. Evaluation Question Seven was included to find out if EMH student needs are being met in the interrelated class.

Results of Evaluation

EMH staff had mixed feelings about using interrelated classrooms as placement options for EMH students. Figure 9 identifies the positive and negative aspects of the interrelated classes according to these educators.

Figure 9

INTERRELATED CLASSROOMS

Positive Aspects	Negative Aspects
1. Labels are removed.	1. Teachers are not trained to work with all exceptionalities.
2. Students accomplish more due to the wide range of abilities.	2. EMH students often copy the behaviors of BD students.
3. A large group functioning at the same level is created, which fosters interaction.	3. LD students have difficulty dealing with EMH student immaturity.
4. Peer teaching/role modeling helps self-concept of LD students.	4. It is difficult to do group activities with wide range of abilities.
5. LD students stimulate discussion.	5. EMH students require so much teacher assistance that other students must work alone a great deal, or EMH students must sit until the teacher has time to help them.
6. LD students achieve and keep teachers from giving up.	
7. Curriculums are similar, so it is more efficient to group.	
8. Students with more than one handicap can receive services for all handicaps.	

Figure 9
(continued)
INTERRELATED CLASSROOMS

Negative Aspects (continued)
6. When EMH students from interrelated classrooms go to high school, they lack motivation and have low self-concepts.
7. The EMH curriculum is weakened.
8. BD and EMH/BD students receive no social work support.
9. EMH students sometimes sit quietly and are undemanding; thus, they receive little attention from the teacher.
10. There are no interrelated classes at the high school level; thus, many of the students in interrelated classes return to regular education at the high school level.

The teachers, in general, thought that interrelated classes could work well if only high functioning students ready for a great deal of mainstreaming were placed into them. They suggested placing more weight on teacher placement recommendation. A few teachers, who had interrelated classes and were coordinating their teaching efforts with other special education teachers, said that such coordination was, in effect, re-establishing self-contained classrooms. Students were being grouped according to ability and behavior because functioning levels were too varied in individual classes.

Evaluation Summary

The Educable Mentally Handicapped (EMH) Program was evaluated during the 1986/87 school year to (1) collect information to answer the questions identified by the EMH staff and (2) provide decision makers with information needed to improve the program. Data were collected from both self-contained and interrelated classrooms.

In interviews with teachers, it was found that many EMH teachers see the need for more vocational materials, job shadowing, and work study opportunities. However, they feel that strong administrator support is imperative to meet these needs. Also, teachers said that the focus of instruction for EMH students in grades 1-8 is on basic academics rather than on pre-vocational and life skill training. In many classes, instructional objectives and materials are similar to those of regular education. Teachers of interrelated classes say that teaching regular education subject matter is necessary to ready students for placement back into regular education, since there are no interrelated classes beyond eighth grade.

Both regular and special education teachers see the benefit of mainstreaming for improving EMH student self-concept and socialization skills. The teachers also agree on the importance of teacher communication to successful mainstreaming. However, EMH teachers feel more positively about the amount of communication currently taking place than the regular education teachers who have EMH students mainstreamed to them.

Although teachers feel that parents should offer more input during IEP conferences, parents seem to prefer to let the EMH staff be the experts. The evaluator, in reviewing findings from EMH studies in other states, found the same concern about lack of parent involvement. In the IEP conferences the evaluator attended, teachers and psychologists explained student progress in terms the parents understood, suggested IEP objectives, asked parents for their opinions, and willingly answered questions. The only problem noted was in a conference in which the parent could not speak English. An interpreter was not available for the conference.

Several special education teachers are concerned about the current placements of special education students. They feel that some students should be classified as EMH/BD and placed in classrooms for that exceptionality, and that teacher recommendations should be given a great deal of weight in decisions to place students in interrelated classrooms. The consensus of the teachers is that interrelated classes work for students who are high functioning and ready for mainstreaming, but that less able students are often placed into them. Through classroom observations, the evaluator identified students who seemed to be having difficulty with their placements. Accuracy of the evaluator's observations were confirmed by the teachers.

Results of study of matched pairs of EMH and regular education students suggested that EMH students are less apprehensive about taking part in classroom discussions and enjoy school more than regular education students, but are more apt to behave inappropriately with peers and teachers. The study also suggested that EMH student achievement gains in arithmetic, spelling, and reading are significantly lower than the gains of very similar students in regular education. Caution must be used in looking at the findings - since program assignment was not random and only the higher functioning EMH students were used in the study - but they seem to encourage the trend of leaving students with borderline IQs in regular education or placing them in interrelated classes with maximum mainstreaming.

APPENDIX A

RESULTS OF EMH STAFF SURVEY FOR IDENTIFICATION OF NEEDS

1. How could the EMH program be improved?

2. How can the IEP process be improved?

3. To what extent do EMH students profit from mainstreaming?

4. Comparing high school graduates of like ability, how do Topeka's EMH graduates rank?

5. What are the latest means of program approaches geared to meet real life needs following high school graduation?

6. Are children who are placed in the EMH program appropriately placed based on I.Q. and social adaptive behavior?

7. What benefits do children gain by staying in regular education versus EMH placement?

8. Does the district have sufficient placement alternatives for EMH students at the middle level?

9. How effective are IEP plans when they must be written before the teacher sees the student?

10. What methods are most effective in building a sense of self-worth?

11. When parents can not be involved in the educational process, what should the teacher do to compensate for this lack of involvement?

12. At what point does the repetition of a concept stop being effective in increasing knowledge?

13. What methods are most effective in building a sense of self-worth in an EMH child?

14. To what extent do EMH students profit from mainstreaming?

15. How can parents be better informed (or have a better understanding) of their child's disability? We have many parents at the high school level who do not believe their child should be reading on the 9th grade level since they now are in high school.

Appendix A
(continued)

16. How do you explain to them their child's limitations will keep them from attaining a 9th grade reading level? Most of our students read on a 3rd to 4th grade level. This is covered in the IEP but some parents aren't able to accept it. Our students don't seem to be as concerned about improving their reading and math levels.

17. How can we make the IEP more meaningful for other students? We go over the IEP with every student whether they attend the staffing or not. I feel the IEP is beneficial to the teacher and parents but I don't feel the students (or at least most of them) give it much attention or concern.

18. How can vocational education for the EMH program be improved?

19. What role should parents play in the education of their EMH children?

20. How is the interrelated classroom affecting the EMH student?

APPENDIX B

EMH WORK STUDY
*Proposed Follow-up Procedure

In the spring of each year, Work Study Follow-Up data sheets will be completed for students who graduated or dropped out of school one and five years ago. In addition, with the exception of the Skills Needed Since Graduation section, forms will be completed for students who will graduate or who dropped out of school in the current year. The follow-up will be conducted in the following manner:

1. In March, a list of students who are eligible for follow-up and currently on the computer data base, along with the information last reported for each student, will be printed and sent to the high school work study program.

2. Staff in the work study program will add the names of students who should be contacted, but who are not on the data base.

3. Staff in the work study programs will contact graduates, dropouts and current seniors. Items that are incorrect or not on the data base will be completed on the Work Study Follow-up data sheets. Detailed location information will be obtained to improve the probability of keeping track of students.

4. In May, data sheets will be returned to the Office of Research and Evaluation. Data will be entered into the computer and summary reports will be generated. Ad hoc requests for information will be honored.

* The data sheet was changed slightly this year for use in doing follow-up on all exceptional students. If a total special education follow-up procedure is desired every year, procedures will need modification. Evaluator developed computer programs can be changed to be applicable for general special education follow-up.

WORK STUDY FOLLOW-UP DATA SHEET

Student Name	_____	Social Security No.	_____
Street Address	_____	Date of Birth	_____
City, State, Zip	_____	Date Last Attendance	_____
Phone Number	_____	Date Last Contact	_____

DESCRIPTIVE INFORMATION
(Please Circle One Choice for Each Item Number)

1. Sex — 1. Male 2. Female
2. Ethnic Background — 1. White 2. Black 3. Mexican American 4. Asian 5. Other
3. Adaptive Behavior Level — 1. High 2. Medium 3. Low
4. Reading Achievement Level — 1. Below 3rd grade 2. 3rd thru 6th grade 3. Above 6th grade
5. Math Achievement Level — 1. Below 3rd grade 2. 3rd thru 6th grade 3. Above 6th grade
6. Graduate? — 1. Yes 2. No
7. Marital Status — 1. Single 2. Married 3. Divorced 4. Separated 5. Widowed
8. Living Arrangement — 1. Self 2. Spouse 3. Parents/Other Family Members 4. Group Home 5. Dormitory 6. Other
9. Children — 1. None 2. 1-3 3. More than 3

SKILLS NEEDED SINCE GRADUATION
(Please circle one choice for each item number.
Also circle "had difficulty" if graduate so indicated.)

1. Maintaining a checking account	1. Yes	2. No.	Had difficulty
2. Opening a savings account	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
3. Applying for credit	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
4. Obtaining a drivers license	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
5. Using public transportation	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty

6. Purchasing insurance	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
7. Registering to vote	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
8. Applying for financial assistance	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty
9. Obtaining employment assistance	1. Yes	2. No	Had difficulty

LOCATION INFORMATION

Parent Name _____
Parent Address _____
Parent Phone _____

Employer Name _____
Employer Address _____
Employer Phone _____

Relative Name _____
Relative Address _____
Relative Phone _____
Relationship _____

Other Name _____
Other Address _____
Other Phone _____
Relationship _____

VOCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Trainer (Name and Location)	Type of Training	Weeks In Training	Training Complete (Yes, No)	Type of Training Legend
				1=Work Activity
				2=Sheltered Employment
				3=Work Adjustment
				4=AVTS Skill Training
				5=Job Corps
				6=Military
				7=Private Trade School

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY
(Starting with most recent)

Employer	Address	Job Description	Weekly Salary	Dates of Employment

Appendix B
(continued)

Data Entry Screen 1

```
STUDENT LAST NAME ............... STUDENT FIRST NAME  ........

STREET ADDRESS    ......................... CITY ......... STATE ABREV...

ZIP CODE .....    PHONE NO. ..........  MS .. SOC.SEC.NO. .........

DATE OF BIRTH ......      DATE LAST ATTEND ......    DATE LAST CONT  ......

SEX:1=MALE,2=FEMALE  .  ETHNICITY:1=W,2=B,3=M,4=A,5=O .

ADP.BEH.:1=HIGH,2=MED.,3=LOW      .

READ.ACHV.:1=BEL.3,2=3-6,3=ABVE 6      . MATH ACHV.:1=BEL.3,2=3-6,3=ABVE 6

GRADUATE  . MARITAL STATUS . LIV.ARRANGE.  . NO.CHILD. .

CHECKING . DIFFICULTY  .  SAVINGS . DIFFICULTY  .

CREDIT   . DIFFICULTY  .  LICENSE . DIFFICULTY  .

PB.TRNS  . DIFFICULTY  .  INS.    . DIFFICULTY  .

VOTE     . DIFFICULTY  .  FINANCE . DIFFICULTY  . EMPLOY. . DIFFICULTY .
```

Data Entry Screen 2

```
PARENT NAME  ......................  STREET ADD.......................
CITY ...........   STATE ABR. ..
FATHERS EMPLOYER  ......................  WORK PHONE .......
MOTHERS EMPLOYER  ......................  WORK PHONE .......
REL. NAME    ...................... STREET ADD.......................
CITY ...........   STATE ABR. ..
OTHER NAME   ...................... STREET ADD.......................
CITY ...........   STATE ABR. ..

TRAINER ...........  TYPE TRAINING . LNGTH TRAINING ..  COMPLETE  .
EMPLOYER ......................  ADDRESS ......................
JOB DESCRIP ...........  WKLY SALARY .   YEAR EMPLOYED ..
EMPLOYER ......................  ADDRESS ......................
JOB DESCRIP ...........  WKLY SALARY .   YEAR EMPLOYED ..
EMPLOYER ......................  ADDRESS ......................
JOB DESCRIP ...........  WKLY SALARY .   YEAR EMPLOYED ..

                                                FINISHED  ...
```

Appendix B
(continued)

KEY TO DATA ENTRY SCREENS

HS	HP for Highland Park TH for Topeka High
Dates	MMDDYY

Graduate through Employ....Difficulty	1 for YES 2 for NO

Weekly Salary (change to yearly, using 52 weeks per year)	1 for under $5,000 2 for $5,000 to $10,000 3 for $10,000 to $15,000 4 for $15,000 to $20,000 5 for more than $20,000

APPENDIX C

* RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY OF THE WIDE RANGE ACHIEVEMENT TEST

The Wide Range Achievement Test items appear to measure what the test's authors say they measure. Also, there is a steady progression of raw score means over age. Figure 10 indicates the WRAT-R's correlations with other achievement tests.

Figure 10

CONCURRENT VALIDITY

	Correlation with WRAT-R		
Test Name	Reading	Spelling	Arithmetic
PIAT	.87	.75	.66
California Achievement Test	.81	.85	.81
Stanford Achievement Test	.82	.71	.60

Test-retest reliability coefficients were determined on a selected number of individuals from the norm group. Reliability coefficients were .94 for reading, .95 for spelling, and .92 for arithmetic.

*Data from the Wide Range Achievement Test Manual, 1984 revised edition, Jastak Associates, Inc.

STAFF SURVEY FOR EMH EVALUATION

As part of the Topeka Board of Education policy requiring instructional programs to be evaluated on a rotating basis, the Office of Research and Evaluation is currently conducting an evaluation of the educable mentally handicapped (EMH) area of special education. One aspect of EMH that is being studied is mainstreaming.

Your input is needed in the study of mainstreaming. Please read each of the statements below. Place an "X" after the response that best expresses your opinion or most accurately finishes the statement as it applies to you. All responses will be kept confidential.

Send the completed survey to the Office of Research and Evaluation in the Administrative Center by March 13. Thank you for your assistance. Results of the evaluation will be made available to district staff when the evaluation has been completed.

Staff Survey for EMH Evaluation

1. Having mentally handicapped students mainstreamed with students in regular education programs can create positive changes in regular students' attitudes about their handicapped peers.

   Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ No opinion _____
   Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

2. Regular and special education teachers communicate and plan together to make mainstreaming of mentally handicapped students successful.

   Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ No opinion _____
   Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

3. Special education staff understand and respond to the realities of the regular education teacher's situation.

   Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ No opinion _____
   Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

4. Mentally handicapped students are involved in the regular education program only to the extent that such placement is appropriate.

   Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ No opinion _____
   Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

5. I have seen education advances from my teaching of mainstreamed educable mentally handicapped students.

   Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ No opinion _____
   Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

Appendix C
(continued)

6. Special education teachers meet with regular education teachers before a student is mainstreamed so that the regular education teacher is prepared to work with the student.

Always _____ Usually _____ Sometimes _____
Never _____ Not sure _____

7. With assistance from special education teachers, mentally handicapped students can be successfully mainstreamed into (mark all that apply):

Academic areas _____ Art _____ Music _____ Phys. Ed. _____
Home Ec. _____ Pre-Vocational and Vocational Ed. _____
Other (please specify) _____

8. Regular education students should be sensitized to the needs and characteristics of the mentally handicapped student before such students are placed into the regular education classroom.

Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ Not sure _____
Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

9. I believe that long-term benefits can be achieved from the integration of special education pupils into regular education.

Strongly agree _____ Agree _____ Not sure _____
Disagree _____ Strongly disagree _____

10. I have taken approximately 0-1 ____ 2-3 ____ 4-5 ____ 6 or more ____ courses in special education.

11. Prior to this year, I had 0-3 ____ 4-7 ____ 8-11 ____ 12 or more ____ years of teaching experience.

12. I presently teach at the elementary school _____ middle school _____ high school _____ level.

Comments: _____

_____

_____

_____